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WHOLE NO. 660

SELF-REVELATION IN VERGIL THE HEART OF A POET

(Concluded from page 173)

The love of Aeneas and Dido, their *amor*, is a natural human tie, for which Vergil carefully prepares us. Dido is *forma pulcherrima* and she is sympathetic, as well as able; Aeneas is a manly figure^{28a}, whose misfortunes enlist sympathy. Vergil marks half a dozen stages by which Aeneas and Dido are inevitably drawn to each other even before the supernatural intervention of the gods makes their infatuation a fact. But an infatuation, an *amor*, it is, like that of Antony and Cleopatra; it is an absolute impediment to the mission of Aeneas. Dido is doomed, *infelix*, from the moment that she yields to her love²⁸. Vergil pauses several times in his narrative to call attention, by comments or 'asides', to the impending tragedy. When Dido sacrifices, ironically enough, to Juno (the goddess of the Roman *iustum matrimonium*), the poet exclaims (4.65-66), *Heu, vatum ignarae mentes! Quid vota furentem, quid delubra iuvant?* When Aeneas tries to veil his intended departure, Dido perceives what is afoot (4.296): *quis fallere possit amantem?* The poet goes so far as to characterize Dido's *amor* as a *culpa* (4.172), thus echoing the very word which Dido herself used (4.19) of her lapse when it first presented itself to her mind as a mere contingency^{28a}.

We can hardly blame Dido for her lapse; but we must not forget, first, that her whole philosophy, like that of her sister, Anna, is one that counsels a yielding of duty to self-seeking human affections. If Aeneas is a Stoic, she is an Epicurean²⁸. In the second place, let us not forget that Vergil, by the very pathos with which he invests the tragedy of Dido, is tacitly protesting against the ruthless way in which the Roman system, and especially Augustus himself, sacrificed family ties to reasons of State²⁸. Aeneas should not have deserted duty for Dido. Yet his lapse was all but inevitable; nevertheless, since he was again called by a divine messenger to the path of duty, he could leave Carthage only by wrecking the life of Dido. *Tantae molis erat*. Dido herself, noble, warm-hearted, tender, wins our pity rather than our positive approval²⁷.

^{28a}See my paper, *Some Remarks on the Character of Aeneas*, *The Classical Journal* 26, 90-111 (November, 1930). C. K. >.

²⁸Compare H. F. Rebert, *The Felicity of Infelix in Virgil's Aeneid*, *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 59 (1928), 57-71. <This paper may be found also on pages 13-28 of a small volume by Professor Rebert, entitled *Virgil and Those Others* (published by The Virgil Bicentennial Committee of Amherst College, Amherst, 1930). C. K. >.

^{28a}See my notes on Aeneid 4, 19, 172, 552, 5.5-6 (in the 1928 version of my edition). C. K. >.

²⁸Compare A. S. Pease, *Some Aspects of the Character of Dido*, *The Classical Journal* 22, 243-252 (January, 1927).

²⁸Compare R. S. Conway, *The Place of Dido in History*, in *New Studies of a Great Inheritance*, 140-164 (London, Murray, 1921). <For a review of this book, by Professor George D. Kellogg, see *The Classical Weekly* 15, 210-211. C. K. >.

²⁷I may refer here to my own discussions of the *amor* of Aeneas and Dido, *The Classical Journal* 19, 206-207 (January, 1924), and 26, 107-111 (November, 1930). See also notes 24a, 25, above. C. K. >.

Hardly less noble, in his own manner, is Turnus, and up to a certain point he wins our sympathy²⁸. His people are suffering an invasion from an alien company; his own hopes of a marriage with Lavinia are being swept aside for no reason that he can recognize; in the end he dies, and wins the sympathy that the fallen will always claim. He and Camilla, together with Nisus and Euryalus, receive the honor of mention in Dante's *Inferno* (1.106-109) because they died of wounds for Italy, that Italy which first assumed national rather than merely geographical meaning during the Social War. But Turnus, like Dido, had the defects of his qualities, and in particular one tragic fault, his *violentia*²⁹, on which Vergil harps constantly, as Turnus speeds toward his end, even more than he does on the *culpa* of *infelix* Dido. Whereas Aeneas and his Trojans stand for *pietas*, and the forces of civilization, Turnus and his tribesmen and even more his ally Mezentius, the *contemptor divum*, embody brute force; if there are just and mighty gods, Aeneas must win, and Saturnia must make her terms with Jupiter. So Turnus falls, not quite reconciled to his fate, as Vergil intimates in the very last verse of the poem—a verse used also of the death of Camilla (11.831), a verse adapted from Homer by the addition of one word, *indignata*. Once more, *Tantae molis erat!* Vergil closes the poem without any picture of a vulgar triumph of Aeneas over his fallen foe, indeed without any fanfare of trumpets or neat gathering up of the threads of his story³⁰. He prefers to leave his reader with the spectacle of the noble Turnus slain, a necessary sacrifice to the progress of the Trojan and Roman cause, slain, moreover, because of a *violentia* which would brook no compromise or conciliation. There is here, perhaps, more counsel for Augustus and for the Roman people on the true mission of Rome. If we find it easier at times to sympathize with downright Turnus than with dutiful Aeneas, we at least cannot doubt which of the two in our own minds, as in Vergil's, is the hope of the world. After all, Satan is not really the hero of *Paradise Lost*, nor is Hector the hero of the *Iliad*.

If the sympathy of modern readers for Dido and for Turnus is so profound as to alienate them, often, wholly from Aeneas, it is perhaps because, in dealing with these two tragic figures, Vergil allowed himself to disturb his epic scheme. Aeneas, it has been said, is

²⁸Compare Aeneid 12.648-649, 676-680, 883-884.

²⁹Compare Professor E. Adelaide Hahn, *Pietas vs. Violentia in the Aeneid*, *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 59 (1928), xxii-xxiii. <Professor Hahn's paper will be published in full in *The Classical Weekly* 25. Her remarks on the *violentia* of Turnus had, of course, been anticipated, e. g. in my own remarks in the Introduction (§ 63) of the first version of my edition of the Aeneid (September, 1901), and in *The Classical Weekly* 21.90 (January 16, 1928). See also the 1928 version of my edition of the Aeneid, Introduction, § 67. C. K. >.

³⁰Compare my comment, *The Classical Weekly* 23.174. Note 1, on Dr. Daniels's paper, *Ultima Verba*. When Professor Greene wrote the words of his text above, he had no knowledge of Dr. Daniels's remarks or of mine. C. K. >.

drawn in the ancient or classical manner, Dido in the modern or romantic manner. I do not venture here to define these terms fully. It is enough for our purpose to observe that classical art at least strives to present fragments of life in their relation to the whole trend of life, whereas romantic art tends to be absorbed in partial views of life. Much of Greek tragedy, as of the Aeneid, gains point from the opposition between the partial view (the will of a hero, for example) and the greater forces represented by the will of the gods or of fate. The individual must suffer who pits himself blindly or foolishly against these forces, be that individual a Dido, or a Turnus, or even an Aeneas who has for the nonce strayed from the path of duty. Deny if you dare the sincerity of Aeneas when he protests (4.361), *Italiam non sponte sequor*, and (6.460), *invitus, regina, tuo de litore cessi*. . . . Hollow words to Dido's ears these are, but they are words spoken from the heart. Aeneas is acting as a free moral agent in leaving Carthage, not as a mere tool of fate, but does that make his suffering less, or more? Answer for him, any who have ever had to make a choice between two evils, or even between two goods either of which must be bought by a sacrifice. It is easy to say that Vergil found to his dismay that Dido had grown beyond his intention or control; but is it not truer to say that the very conception of Dido was from the beginning that of an appealing figure, who had rights of her own, but whose rights were incompatible with the realization of the destiny of Rome? That, I take it, is part of what Vergil is setting forth in Book 6. There Aeneas learns from his father that the *Fatum Romanum* which has cruelly crushed Dido and wrung his own heart is nevertheless a beneficent force, destined not only to prevail but to bring happiness to mankind. There Dido appears once more, still estranged from Aeneas, but restored to Sychaeus, now that her *culpa* has been expiated by pain and by death.

What I am trying to suggest is that the Aeneid, besides being a story of engrossing human interest, is also an attempt to discover the thread of moral significance that runs through life. I do not mean that Vergil has written a tale with an obvious moral, a tale in which virtue is rewarded and vice is punished; on the contrary, *pius Aeneas* is rewarded for years with hardships and anguish of heart. *Tantaene animis caelestibus irae?* is the note struck at the outset. But Vergil does intimate that the world is on the whole a good one, in which heroism and love and duty are the supreme goods, but in which there are many pitfalls and illusory hopes. Vergil does not paint in hard outlines an attractive hero who fights his way triumphantly over all obstacles. His Golden Age is no longer an accomplished fact, past, present, or imminent; it is rather the world in process of being remade by the forces of humanity and tolerance. Hence come the 'Celtic'²¹ mists of Vergil's landscapes, the half-lights that play on his characters, the contradictions in the character of Aeneas himself. For Aeneas the last word on any matter is not a dogmatic thesis, but a balancing of possibilities. He "seems to halt between two or

more opinions", as Professor Conway has said²², even when he inclines on the whole to one view. Vergil deals with the destiny of the soul in terms both of the popular mythology and of Stoic or Platonic philosophy. He even looks at things "from a dual, antithetic standpoint", perceiving a "tragic contradiction . . . beneath this lovingkindness of the world"²³, never sure that he has fathomed the "doubtful doom of humankind". How Fate and free-will are contrasted in the very language of Jupiter's prophecy to Venus in Book 1! How good and evil struggle in the characters of Turnus and Mezentius! Poetry and philosophy contend with each other, but poetry prevails in the end, for, after the splendid pageant of human destiny unfolded by Anchises in the underworld, through which gate does Aeneas emerge into the light of day? Through the gate of false dreams. A splendid vision, Vergil intimates, Aeneas has seen, but it is only a vision, after all; who knows the very truth of things²⁴? But, you say, can Vergil really mean to question the value of the Roman Empire? Is not this treason to Rome? If so, let us face it resolutely; possibly Vergil could rise even above patriotism. He seems almost ready to do so in the deliberate ambiguity of a verse of the Georgics (2.498): no wars, he says, dismay the lover of country life, *non res Romanae perituraque regna*. May the 'realms destined to perish' be none other than the *res Romanae*? Such a double statement of the same idea in the two halves of a verse is characteristic of Vergil. However that may be, we may recognize in general Vergil's preference for the concrete story that suggests, rather than states, the truth, that adumbrates the direction where the truth may lie, that, like a parable or a Platonic myth, expresses values, not mere facts, that leaves room for both sides of a case to linger in the mind. Such a story, to borrow an expression dear to Dante, is not merely literal, or allegorical, or moral, but 'anagogical': it has a spiritual significance.

How different, then, is the Aeneid from all other epics, and how different is Aeneas from the confident, successful heroes of other epics! Instead of fighting his way through to a conclusion with the ardor of the brilliant Achilles, instead of matching his wits with fortune, as the much-tried Odysseus does, he moves resolutely through the obscure issues of life, discerning a distant goal, to be sure, and approaching it by slow steps, but feeling the weight of sorrow all the way. To some readers this means that Vergil has marred his poem by a too intense preoccupation with life's perplexities. Professor Garrod²⁵, an acute critic, thinks that Vergil

is for ever in the Aeneid being carried out of his own intention Aeneas is . . . the wrong man in the wrong place

Vergil set before himself a Ulysses, perhaps even an

²¹In the course of a paper entitled *An Unnoticed Aspect of Vergil*, in *Harvard Lectures on the Vergilian Age*, 65 (Harvard University Press, 1928).

²²R. S. Conway, *The Philosophy of Vergil*, pages 98, 111 of the work named in note 31, above.

²³For a very different view of this matter see my note on *porta . . . eburna*, Aeneid 6.897-898. The view presented in that note, in both versions of my edition, I owe to some one else, but I am not able now to tell exactly whence I derived it. C. K. >

²⁴H. W. Garrod, in the essay mentioned in note 5, above. See especially pages 150-152, 161.

<²⁵See note 33 a, below. C. K. >

Achilles. Nature set before him a St. Louis—a crusading knight and a 'holy war'. In the issue he hovers between the two conceptions—and fails....

<Vergil> ... essays <in Aeneas> a warrior, and achieves—or nearly—a visionary. He pictures a city, and it seems to melt into a Church... Always something breaks in upon his resolution. Always, when he sees the light, he sighs.

This is the fatal flaw in Vergil's romantic genius, which, is "never quite confident, wholly efficient"; Vergil everywhere, Professor Garrod says, "sees visions—which he cannot hold..." It is from the poet's Celtic^{33a} blood that Professor Garrod would derive his passionate nature, full of animosities, of contradictions and of revolt.

There is so much of truth in Professor Garrod's criticism that I hesitate to refrain from taking with him the final step and from regarding what he has so eloquently set forth as evidence of what he calls Vergil's "failure". Rather let me agree with him that the Aeneid "succeeds most precisely where it fails most", for I am moved to regard these truly Vergilian qualities of art and temperament as precisely Vergil's greatest achievement. Vergil is indeed an idealist, or, if you prefer, a visionary, who is bent on remaking the world. The success of the visionary is to be measured not by the test of tangible deeds or of triumphant influence on his fellowmen (though even here, too, Vergil is perhaps not to be found altogether wanting), but rather by the extent to which he succeeds in kindling the imaginations and the sympathies of other men. Lost causes are not necessarily contemptible; even under-dogs deserve their day. Nisus and Euryalus, in death not divided, should and do win a more lasting response in our hearts than the warriors who slay their thousands and their ten thousands. Is it a reproach against Plato's Republic that it begins with the criticism of existing Greek institutions, and ends with a vision of a heavenly city, not built with hands, which no man has ever seen or ever will see? Even if it be but "a pattern laid away in heaven", it speaks to us with authority. But let us not shut our eyes to the more tangible success of Vergil in depicting an epic hero whose adventures transform him from the mere swordsman of the Iliad or from the shadowy village-founder of Roman tradition into the enlightened founder of a people that, in Vergil's day, was actually moving toward the light, partly through Vergil's own suasion. Are not the qualms and the misgivings, the failures and the broken lives also a part of Vergil's glory, as proof that he has seen at what cost all progress is made? At the heart of things remains the mystery, unsolved by man, of undeserved suffering, of single wills thwarted for some good end which is not their end—the problem of evil. To ignore it is to ignore that which makes life so fascinating and rich and dangerous; to reckon with it is to court failure, and perhaps now and then to win some new, if melancholy, sense of

^{33a}In The Classical Journal 25 (1930), 340-346, Miss Leonora R. Furr, in a paper entitled The Nationality of Vergil, argues, on the basis of Latin inscriptions, that the Gens Vergilia and the Gens Magia, the gentes respectively of Vergil's father and Vergil's mother, were of Samnite origin. She refuses to believe that Vergil was of Celtic origin. Her conclusion is that "Vergil is a genuine Italian singing the glories of his own race". C. K. >

having come to grips with reality. That may be failure, but it is as near success as a poet dare hope to come. No little part of Vergil's glory, I believe, is his unique power of feeling to the full the pathos, the futility, the evil of life, without ever abating in the least his conviction of the goodness of life.

Even more, therefore, than in his deliberate programme, or in his epic craftsmanship, Vergil reveals himself wherever he betrays his own affections and loyalties to friends and causes and the characters whom he has created. These, he seems to imply, are the abiding things, whatever may be their fortune in this transitory world; to love them is to spend one's days well.

Let us notice some of the objects of his affection. First there are his friends, poets or statesmen, whose names stud his pages like bright stars, and at the thought of whom he always seems to show a special warmth of feeling; his master Siron, his benefactors Alfenus Varus, Pollio, and Gallus (the latter a kindred spirit), Maecenas, no less his counsellor than the friend of Horace, Octavian, the rising hope of the new age and its arch-champion, and the poet's literary friend and executor, Varius. We must not forget his father, for whom he showed such solicitude in the little poem of the Catalepton (8). We are reminded again and again of his love of the myriad aspects of nature. Now it is his delight in the outward beauty of the country-side, his Homeric interest in the spectacle of flowers, mountains, stars, birds, and the sea; now it is his Theocritean love of nature's more endearing features; again it is his Hesiodic preoccupation with the never-ending cycle of human activities carried on within nature's province; again it is his Lucretian sense of awe in the contemplation of nature's vast movements and their inevitable consummation³⁴. He finds time to spend sympathy on the flowers uprooted by the plough, on the hungry brood of swallows and even on the bees that they devour, as well as on the graver claims for pity among mankind. On the very morning when the heads of Nisus and Euryalus are exposed in the Latin camp Evander is awakened from his slumber by the songs of birds (Aeneid 8.455).

Though it is not his most obvious quality, Vergil does not lack a sense of humor. It is most pointed, of course, in the Priapea and other poems of the Catalepton (including the masterly parody of Catullus), and it inspires the mock heroic of the Culex (157-414) and in the account of the battle of the bulls (Georgics 3.219-241), and the amused sympathy with which the poet observes the activities of the kingdom of the bees (4.1-280), but there are countless flashes of humor in the Aeneid^{35a}. Consider a few from Book 1:

³⁴Compare Georgics 2.323-345, a wonderful passage, uniting the fervor of Lucretius and the lyric beauty of the Pervigilium Veneris.

^{35a}On humor in the Aeneid and more especially in the Georgics I commented long ago (1917), in The American Journal of Philology 38, in the course of the article referred to in note 9, above. I commented there especially on Aeneid 1. 736-739.

The best discussion of humor in the Georgics is to be found in A. Sedgwick's edition of Vergil, 1.15, 39-40 (2 Volumes. Cambridge: At the University Press, 1890, 1894. The passages are quoted in part in my article).

See also Professor Joseph W. Hewitt's paper, Humor in Homer and in Vergil, THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 22.169-172, 177-181. C. K. >

the rhetorical appeal of Venus to Jupiter, and Jupiter's indulgent reply, *olli subridens* (1.254), the scene between the shipwrecked Aeneas and his goddess-mother in disguise, the boyish delight of Cupid in mimicking Ascanius, *gressu gaudens incedit Iuli* (1.690); in fact much of the divine machinery of the poem is a divine comedy. Among mortals, observe the table manners of Dido's guest Bitias; after the queen has daintily touched her lips to the cup, like Chaucer's Prioress, for politeness's sake, then, Bitias, 'nothing loth, washes himself down and drains the full foaming, golden cup' (1.736-739). Nor do we need to be reminded of the comedy that brightens the solemn funeral games for Anchises (5.178-182).

The characteristic Vergilian sympathy that is so readily extended to suffering animals, especially to the dumb, innocent victims of the plague (Georgics 3.474-566), is no less ready to embrace the human victims of war, the war that so cruelly disturbs the joy of country life and the normal pursuits of mankind. Take a single instance, in which Vergil seems to bare his heart, perhaps even to be painting himself into the picture of a brother-minstrel, stricken down in battle: the missile slew³⁶

'Clytius, and Cretheus, the friend of the Muses, Cretheus, the comrade of the Muses, to whom songs and the lyre were ever dear, and strains set to its strings, and who ever sang of steeds, and arms of men, and battles'.

How tenderly the poet lingers over the name, and seeks to revive the memory of the singer's art now stilled by death! But Vergil's death scenes are always invested with a peculiar pathos. There is no finer example than the story of the death of young Pallas, cut down in his prime, but beautiful in death as a drooping flower plucked by a maiden's hand (10.501-510, 11.42-99). Other scenes crowd on the mind; always it is the untimely dead whom Vergil laments most tenderly, *pueri innuptaeque puellae, impositique rogis iuvenes ante ora parentum* (Georgics 4.476-477 = Aeneid 6.307-308), and, above all, a Marcellus whose early death cheats not only his own promise but the hopes of the world. Is it Anchises, or is it Vergil himself³⁷ who turns grief into hope, calling for flowers to scatter the bright hyacinth linked with the hope of immortality? 'Bring lilies full-handed; let me scatter the bright flowers, and with these offerings, at least, pay honor to the spirit of my descendant, and perform a fruitless rite'. A fruitless rite? Not if there be a soul to receive it in gratitude, not if Dante understands Vergil, for it is Vergil's very words, sung by an angelic choir, that Dante hears³⁸ in the Earthly Paradise, just as he loses the guidance of Vergil himself: *Manibus o date lilia plenis*.

This continuing affection of person for person, and the devotion of the individual to his country, two forms of *pietas*, are among Vergil's chief objects of loyalty. It is manifested in most of the major family relationships, and especially in that between father and son.

³⁶Aeneid 9.774-777. The juxtaposition of the words *arma virum* can hardly be accidental.

³⁷Aeneid 6.883-886. Compare Conway, in *New Studies*, etc., 158 (for this work see notes 5, 26, above).

³⁸Purgatorio 30. 21.

The Golden Bough is discovered through the interplay of natural affections, of father and son, of son and mother, of friend and friend. How Vergil thought of his own father in a time of danger we have already noticed. Not otherwise does Aeneas at the sack of Troy, when he beholds the cruel death of aged Priam, bethink him of his aged father (2.560): *subiit cari genitoris imago*. This is a natural thought, not unknown to Lady Macbeth, when she came near to killing the aged, sleeping Duncan³⁹: "Had he not resembled my father as he slept, I had done it". So, too, the devotion of Euryalus to his mother reminds Ascanius of his own affection for his father (9.294): *atque animum patriae strinxit pietatis imago*. When Aeneas, 'son of Anchises', looks on the pale face of the dying Lausus, whose very love for his father has worked his doom, "fallit te incautum pietas tua", he groans in pity (10.812), stretching forth his hand, and (the phrase is almost the same as in 9.294) 'his heart is touched by the sight of a son's great love' (10.824). Thus we come to realize the meaning of *lacrimae rerum*, the tear of sympathy for suffering, the heart that is touched by our mortal lot, that is Vergil's peculiar gift. There are other pictures of the relation between parent and son: Aeneas rescuing his father before all others from burning Troy (2.634-724, 804), and torn between affection and despair at his death (3.708-713), Evander bidding affectionate farewell to his dear son, Pallas, his *sola et sera voluptas* (8.572), the mother of Euryalus likewise addressing her dead son (9.482) as *senectae sera meae requies*.

It is a pity that so many schoolboys know the famous pair of friends, Nisus and Euryalus, only from the semi-comic story of the footrace. They are brothers in arms, if not in blood, whose very devotion to each other is the ultimate cause of their death. It is not their stirring adventure that concerns us here, but rather the striking fact that their death causes Vergil, as in few other places, to drop his epic reserve and in person to address the dead warriors in almost lyric strain, not to commiserate with them on their sad doom, but to congratulate them (9.446-449):

'O happy pair, if aught my song avail, no day shall ever blot out your names from the memory of time, while Aeneas's line shall dwell upon the Capitol's immovable rock, and the Roman father holds sovereign power'.

What won the pair such a splendid immortality of song? Not victory, but love and self-sacrifice. Not otherwise is it with the poet's brief lament for Pallas, whose brave death will bring to his father not grief only, but grief and a mighty glory (10.507): *O dolor atque decus magnum rediture parenti*. . . . Once more, in telling of the last rash battle of young Lausus, Vergil pauses at the exact point at which Lausus, overcome with grief at seeing 'his dear father' wounded, is about to rush to his death at the hands of Aeneas (10.791-793):

'O ever to be remembered lad, if the remoteness of the time can bring belief in your great deeds, I shall not fail to sing of you, of the mischance of your cruel death, of your noble prowess'.

³⁹Macbeth 2.2.13.

Goodness, then, and love, and patriotism redeem sorrow. Can we go further still and claim for Vergil a philosophy of optimism? If God is in his Heaven, is all right with the world? Certainly we have seen reason enough to recognize Vergil's constant preoccupation with adversity. There is not a more significant word in his poems than *nequiquam*. Nature, even bountiful nature, tends to degenerate (*Georgics* 1.199-200): sic omnia fati in peius ruere. But toil conquers all; and indeed toil was instituted by Jupiter for our good (*Georgics* 1.121-124). Hardship may become the occasion of a positive good, if it evokes endurance, and in the end may be recalled with actual pleasure: compare *Aeneid* 1.203-206, forsan et haec olim meminisse iuvabit. . . . Durate, et vosmet rebus servate secundis, and 5.710, Quidquid erit, superanda omnis fortuna ferendo est. Evander on the Palatine, a king content in poverty, will serve for the type that Vergil approves. For a contrast Turnus will serve, Turnus, whose despoiling of Pallas impels the poet to remark that men's minds know nothing of fate or doom, nor, when puffed up with success, how to observe the mean (10.501-502): Nescia mens hominum fati sortisque futurae et servare modum rebus sublata secundis. With a similar cry (3.56-57) the poet breaks into his narrative to exclaim at the wickedness that the accursed hunger for gold brings forth: quid non mortalia pectora cogis, auri sacra fames?

Shall we say, then, that Vergil is impressed more by the evil and the futility, or by the goodness and the heroism in life? As I have suggested, it is the goodness that is ultimate; yet there are hard cases to try the faith of man and to raise questions as to the divine control of things. There is *Rhipeus* (2.426-428), 'the most just man and the most observant of right among the Trojans', one deserving to live, it would be supposed; but *dis aliter visum*, and he fell with the rest. We have just noted the *pietas* of Lausus, the devotion to his father which actually caused his death. There is Aeneas himself, a would-be man of peace, compelled to fight because of a random arrow loosed by an unknown hand: was it luck or a god that intervened? *Incertum . . . casus deusne* (12.320-321). No wonder that, before relating the renewed carnage, the poet asks (12.500-504) whether it could have been the pleasure of Jupiter to permit it. Is it the gods, Nisus asks Euryalus (9.184-185), that inspire us, or do our own desires form our gods? Presently (9.211) he reckons with the possibility that his plans may be carried amiss by some power: si quis in adversum rapiat casusve deusve. These few instances must suffice here to illustrate the mystery that Vergil never professed to have solved—the "doubtful doom of human kind".

We must grant Vergil his reticences and doubts and ambiguities and suspensions of judgment; they are part of the man. He would be the less Vergil if he had not written the Helen episode in *Aeneid* 2 (566-588), and he would have been the less Vergil if he had not had some misgivings about it. Varius and Tucca may have been in his confidence; according to Servius it was they who excised the lines. If Vergil had lived to revise the poem, who can doubt that he would have cut out

also the lines telling of the captives butchered by Aeneas over the pyre of Pallas?^{38a} But why did Vergil wish the whole poem destroyed? Not, I take it, because of any minor technical imperfections. The half-lines, 'pathetic' sometimes in themselves³⁹, and sometimes as evidences of the lack of a final revision, could easily have been completed with the finish that marks the *Georgics*; indeed, Vergil sometimes finished a half-line on the spur of the moment while he was reciting⁴⁰. To reconcile the inconsistencies⁴¹ between the several books would not have been a hopeless task. The graver reason for the poet's dissatisfaction with his work, I suspect, is that it bears so clearly the marks of his own divided mind on so many issues; and his ultimate haven, as he hoped, was to be philosophy⁴². Perhaps, however, we prize the poem on this very account not less but rather more. For the longer we live the more we realize the richness of life and the impossibility of confining it within narrow formulae. In many matters we can know only in part, even if we must act as if we had full knowledge; but we may feel to the full extent of our powers of sympathy. So we get from Vergil what we bring to Vergil, with the added power of his own profound sympathy. If all that we can appreciate is a story, he gives us that; if it is music and the witchery of words, he adds that; and many readings of his poems add precious associations and an increasing depth of understanding⁴³. The prophecies of the *Sortes Vergilianae*⁴⁴ are true prophecies, for deep answers deep, the poet's heart our own heart, and each of us appropriates from Vergil's thought only what fits his own experience.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

WILLIAM CHASE GREENE

REVIEWS

From Maumee to Thames and Tiber. The Life-Story of an American Classical Scholar. By Ernest G. Sihler. The New York University Press (1930). Pp. x + 269. \$5.00.

At a meeting of the American Philological Association, held at New Haven, December 27-29, 1922, Professor John A. Scott presented the following resolution: Resolved, that the American Philological Association felicitate Professor E. G. Sihler on the completion of seventy years, so many of which have been devoted with singular fidelity to the highest ideals of scholar-

^{38a}On this passage see the fine discussion in a book by Professor Catharine Saunders, *Vergil's Primitive Italy* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1930), in the chapter entitled *Human Sacrifice*, pages 97-120. C. K. >

³⁹Compare F. J. Miller, *Evidences of Incompleteness in the Aeneid of Vergil*, *The Classical Journal* 8, 341-355 (June, 1909).

⁴⁰Donatus (= Suetonius), *Vita Vergilii* 34.

⁴¹On these inconsistencies see the book mentioned in note 38a, above, in the chapter entitled *The Relation of Aeneid III to the Rest of the Poem*, 194-209, and my remarks in *THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY* 24, 42-43. C. K. >

⁴²See F. W. H. Myers's essay, *Vergil*, for a fine passage citing associations of particular lines with persons and events. <Professor Greene had in mind a volume entitled *Essays Classical* (1883). This was reprinted and combined with another book, also by Professor Myers, in a volume entitled *Essays Classical and Modern* (London, Macmillan, 1921). The essay on Vergil covers pages 106-176 in both works. In a notice of the latter work, in *THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY* 17, 53-54 (November 19, 1923), I quoted in part, it happens, the particular passage Professor Greene had in mind. C. K. >

⁴³For the *Sortes Vergilianae* see a paper by Miss Helen M. Loane, *The Sortes Vergilianae*, *THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY* 18 (1928), 185-189. I myself discussed this subject in *THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY* 18 (1924), 33-34, 22 (1928), 88. See also 24.94. C. K. >

ship, and join with its congratulations the hope that he may still live many happy years and that he may often be present in future meetings of our Association to encourage and inspire our members.

This very unusual action was but a fitting recognition of the long series of Classical Studies by which Professor Sihler has deserved not only *bene* but *optime* of American classical scholarship, and which have carried his name wherever Greek and Latin are studied. The publication of his Autobiography provides us with an intimate account of the circumstances and the influences under which this typically American career has developed and leads to the hope that the volume entitled *From Augustus to Augustine!* will not prove the last of Professor Sihler's searching studies of ancient life and thought.

Professor Sihler's father, the Reverend Dr. Wilhelm von Sihler, had been bred as a soldier, but, finding this life unattractive, he turned to literature and prepared himself for teaching, obtaining his Ph.D. degree from the University of Jena in 1829. After some years spent in this profession, he experienced a call to preach, as a result of which, after some years of further preparation, he came to this country under the auspices of the Lutheran Missionary Societies of Riga and Dresden. He arrived at New York City on November 1, 1843. After a brief interval he finally settled in Fort Wayne, Indiana, then little more than a frontier town, and largely inhabited by German immigrants who for many years had been pouring into the Middle West in steadily increasing numbers.

This region was then essentially a pioneer country, as students of Abraham Lincoln know very well, and the German immigrants were also of pioneer stock, lovers of freedom and deeply religious, bearing much the same relation to the Middle West that the Puritans had borne to New England—ideal material for substantial and progressive citizens, as their subsequent history was to prove. They were inured to hardship, tried by adversity; they bore their Church in the one hand, and their School in the other.

In this atmosphere of simple living and high thinking Professor Sihler was born, and simple living and high thinking have characterized his life down to the present time. The recollections of his childhood are vivid. The tempestuous partisanship of the political life of the period made a deep impression upon his youthful mind. When he was seven years old, in 1860, he saw Lincoln hanged in effigy.

His first important text-book was Wackernagel's *Lesebuch*, a Reader filled with choice selections from German literature, both prose and verse. Later he had an English reader, the material of which was so trivial as to compare, even in his childish mind, most unfavorably with that of the German book. Even then the idea was becoming common in this country that the text-book should be debased to the level of the child instead of the child being raised to the level of the text-book. At the age of nine he began the

study of Latin. Two years later he had his first lesson in Greek. His career had begun.

From the Gymnasium he went to the Theological Seminary at St. Louis, but, while he did graduate, and with distinction, in the latter part of his course he became convinced that his interest lay in philology rather than in theology. His father proved sympathetic and understanding, and arranged for him to go to Berlin in 1872, to study classical philology. With him went his brother Christian, who was to study medicine in Berlin.

In Germany, Sihler had a wonderful experience. The courses which he took, the names of the great men under whom he studied, beginning with his first semester, when he heard Haupt, Kirchhoff, Huebner, and Droysen, arouse keen memories in the minds of us oldsters, to whom these men were giants, and that period the culmination of the stupendous surge in classical scholarship which had started in Germany at the beginning of the century. How many of our great American names connect with that period and with Germany! Gildersleeve and Goodwin had preceded Sihler by only a few years. Humphreys and Charles Forster Smith were his fellow-students and friends. Many others were to follow. The present generation of German classical scholars is doubtless equally distinguished or to be distinguished, but it will be difficult to make us, to whom Ritschl, Vahlen, and Mommsen were almost household words, raise to the pantheon even a Wilamowitz. Then, too, we have developed in this country our own scholarship, a fact which Professor Sihler emphasizes time and again; and Germany is no longer and never will be again the focus of vision of all classical students.

Professor Sihler returned to the United States by reason of exhaustion of funds in the spring of 1875; his dissertation, however, was finished and in print. After a trying year of teaching he received the first Fellowship in Greek in The Johns Hopkins University, then newly established. In two years he became the University's first Doctor of Philosophy in Greek. His obligations to Professor Gildersleeve he never has ceased to acknowledge, as is the case with all who have contributed to his progress in life. His recollections of the beginnings of The Johns Hopkins University are not only interesting in themselves, but are valuable for the history of education in the United States. Later on he was Professor in New York University at a time when that institution was moribund; he shared in its reorganization and revival. Alumni of New York University will therefore find much of value in his account of that period.

Those who desire to follow Professor Sihler through the vicissitudes of his busy life as school instructor, member of the Greek Club of New York, and University professor will find in these pages much to interest, a great deal to instruct, and not a little to inspire. There runs throughout a spirit of kindness and tolerance, and it is evident that increasing years have ever brought to the author increasing understanding of man's human relationships and sympathy for them.

¹From *Augustus to Augustine: Essays and Studies Dealing with the Contact and Conflict of Classic Paganism and Christianity* (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1923. Pp. xi + 335).

The list of Professor Sihler's studies covers the whole range of both Greek and Latin literature from Homer to Augustine. Nearly a dozen books and many monographs bear his name. The amount of unpublished manuscripts which he has presented to New York University is simply prodigious. As he grew in years, his attention became more and more engrossed with the spiritual meaning of ancient life and letters, and perhaps his most important work has been done in that field. But his biographies of Caesar and Cicero merit the careful study of all teachers in the High Schools. Many acute minor studies throw light on obscure matters of philology and literature.

Professor Sihler's practice in all his investigations was to make the ancient authors speak for themselves. Constant and detailed study of the ancient texts, by which he drew from them their meaning without prejudice or suggestion, using other scholars only after his own conclusions had been reached, basing every statement upon accurate and painstaking research, after comprehensive excerpts, abstracts, digests and the like, had been made, with the sole purpose of sound, honest interpretation, were the foundations upon which he built his books, from his edition of the Protagoras of Plato to his volume From Augustus to Augustine.

If the conclusions to which he came were sometimes not palatable to some of his readers, if, in the opinion of some, his very strictness led to narrowness, if a disgruntled German critic became abusive, he comforted himself with the adage that 'Contempt solves no problem', and rested in the consciousness that honesty of purpose, thoroughness of study, and readiness to follow the argument relieved him from any responsibility for the result.

Thus, at the age of 78, after a life well spent in service to truth and to others, as he began his book with the recognition of the divine law, 'Honor thy father and mother', so he can close with a similar acknowledgment of the divine sovereignty, 'Cede Deo'.

NEW CANAAN, CONNECTICUT

GONZALEZ LODGE

Hellenistic Poetry. By Alfred Körte. Translated by Jacob Hammer and Moses Hadas. With a Preface by Edward Delavan Perry. New York: Columbia University Press (1929). Pp. xix + 446. \$4.00.

In the Preface to his volume entitled *Die Hellenistische Dichtung*¹, Professor Alfred Körte, of the University of Leipzig, states (according to the Translators' Preface [xv] in the English version of the book, by Messrs. Hammer and Hadas) that "... This little book is intended not for scholars but for the wider circle of readers who can appreciate poetry even when it is presented in a foreign garb ...". It was his purpose, in other words, to present to the student of literature an adequate and readable survey of the chief representatives of Hellenistic Greek poetry and to supplement his discussion with copious extracts from this poetry translated into German verse. His treatment, therefore, is by no means exhaustive. The scholarly reader should have this fact clearly in mind before he approaches either Körte's German original or the translated edition here under review. If the Greek scholar

hopes to find light shed on every remote corner of Hellenistic poetry, he should not turn to these books. On the other hand, either one of them may be read with profit by the student of classical Greek poetry who has only a bowing acquaintance with the Hellenistic literature; and the student of Latin literature who wishes to trace toward their origins some of the tendencies appearing in pre-Augustan and Augustan verse will find in Professor Körte a helpful guide.

Messrs. Hammer and Hadas, in their American edition, have translated, adapted, and supplemented the German original. They have faithfully reproduced in clear English, Professor Körte's own discussion; they have replaced his German verse renderings by carefully selected translations in English verse; and they have exceeded the scope of treatment which Professor Körte himself intended (for which no one need quarrel with them at all) by adding an extensive bibliography of their own compiling. Their manuscript, before it went to press, had the benefit of Professor Körte's critical examination and the addition by him of "numerous suggestions" which were incorporated into the English text (xvi). The result is a very useful and scholarly book.

The contents of the volume are as follows: Preface <by Edward Delavan Perry> (vii-xiii); Translators' Preface (xv-xviii); Introduction: Hellenism (3-9); Part I: The New Comedy (13-79); Part II: Alexandria <General Discussion> (83-94), 1. Elegy (94-150); 2. The Epic, a) The Heroic Epic (150-245); b) Didactic Poetry (245-257); 3. Drama (257-276); 4. The Mime (276-350); 5. The Epigram (350-404); List of Books (407-437); Index (441-446).

For the purposes of his study Professor Körte generously extended the limits of the so-called Hellenistic Age to include "the period of about three hundred years from 323 to 30 B. C. ..." (5). Within these limits he chose a topographical and topical scheme of treatment. After a brief Introduction, in which the general characteristics of Hellenistic poetry are summarily considered—its subordination to prose, its lack of a "spiritual relation to religion...", its cosmopolitan tone, and its restricted appeal to the learned—, there follows a long section devoted to the one form of poetry, comedy, that flourished at Athens and not at Alexandria during the Hellenistic Age. The transition from Old to Middle Comedy and the development of Middle Comedy lie outside the prescribed field of study, but are discussed briefly in a few pages (13-22). The rest of Part I is then devoted to New Comedy, and almost exclusively to its chief representative, Menander, who is called (78) the "last Attic and, at the same time, first Hellenistic poet—whose works have influenced so deeply and permanently the literature of the world—not a creative genius of the highest rank, but a great artist of rare maturity and delicacy". Large extracts from the *Perikeiromene* and the *Epiptontes*, in particular, are quoted in F. G. Allinson's translation (in *The Loeb Classical Library*), and their plots are outlined to exemplify Menander's strength and brilliance in the delineation of character and his comparative weakness in the portrayal of situation.

In Part II the reader is transported from Athens to Alexandria, to remain there until the end of the book. In twelve preliminary pages the setting of Alexandrian literature—the Museum and its great Library, the erudite librarians and cataloguers, the city's cosmopolitan population and its learned reading public, to whose tastes the Alexandrian poets consciously adapted their writings, and, finally, the versatility of its poet-scholars—is considered. The six chief genres of Alexandrian Hellenistic poetry (elegy, epic, didactic, drama, mime, and epigram) are then treated separately in sections of varying length. Each section contains a brief sketch of the development of its type in Greek literature prior to the Hellenistic Age and a fuller literary discussion of the style and the contents of the

¹Leipzig: Alfred Kröner (1925). Professor Hammer reviewed this volume in *Classical Philology* 22 (1927), 115-118.

principal Hellenistic representatives of that type, with special emphasis upon one or two outstanding writers in each case. Thus, in the section on Elegy most of the space is devoted to the elegiac verses of Callimachus (99-148), "the most significant and the most fascinating personality among the Alexandrian poets ..." (99), but mention is made also of the works of Antimachus (95), Philetas (96), Hermesianax (96-97), Phanocles (97-99), Eratosthenes (148), and Parthenius (148-150). The Heroic Epic is naturally concerned above all with the Argonautica of Apollonius of Rhodes (177-243), "whose influence in world literature is generally underestimated ..." (176) and which deserves, therefore, the detailed treatment accorded to it; but space is given also to Callimachus (153-157), Theocritus (157-164), Euphorion (165-169), Moschus (169-176), and Rhianus (243-245). Under Didactic Poetry the Phaenomena of Aratus receives the principal consideration, but Nicander's Theriaca and Alexipharmaca are mentioned (256-257). Drama, either as tragedy or as comedy, seems never to have flourished in the Alexandrian milieu; Lycophron's obscure Alexandra (Cassandra) is studied in some detail (262-276) as one of the most unusual poems in literary history, not without misgivings as to whether or not it can reasonably be classed as tragedy at all: "... in the literature of the world it stands alone, for which we may thank Heaven!" (274). The Mime of the Hellenistic period, so "highly suggestive of the modern film dramas ..." (278), engaged the attention notably of Theocritus (279-320), Bion (320-325), and the realist Herodas (325-346).

The epigram, of course, was a type of Greek poetry that was wide-flung in its appeal; "no other type of Hellenistic poetry" affords "so many charming works from so many hands ..." (350). Professor Körte distinguishes two 'movements' in the composition of Hellenistic epigram—the Ionic-Alexandrian, and the Peloponnesian-Doric. As representative of the former are mentioned especially the poems of Asclepiades (358-370), Posidippus (370-376), Hedylus (376-378), and the versatile Callimachus (378-388). The Peloponnesian-Doric type is represented by Anyte (389-392), Nossis (392-392), Leonidas of Tarentum (393-397), Alcaeus of Messene (397-400), Meleager (400-401), and Philodemus (401-404), and others. To Meleager credit is given for his work as an anthologist (351); but to dismiss him as a poet with the remark that "he is no great light" (400) seems to me to be less than he deserves. Some mention might have been made also of the epigrams of Antipater of Sidon, who has many creditable verses under his name in the Anthology. In the account of the history of the Anthology the part played by Cephalas is mentioned (352), but all reference to the later Planudes is omitted. It is a pity, too, that Professor Körte did not select for citation Callimachus's famous Heracleitus epigram (Anthologia Palatina 7.80), if only that he might have enabled the American translators to insert in their book the famous translation by William (Johnson) Cory.

It is clear that for the numerous translated passages contained in their book Messrs. Hammer and Hadas have taken pains "to select the best verse translations available ..." in English (xvi). Their care has had good issue. In a few instances they have had renderings made especially for them. But in most cases they have made use of various translations already available in published form. Thus, Allinson serves them for most of Menander, Way for Apollonius and Moschus and some of Theocritus, Tytler for much of Callimachus, Poste for Aratus, Sharples for Herodas, and MacGregor, Leaf, Pott, and Wright for most of the

epigrams. Occasionally a prose translation is employed, especially to supplement a freer verse rendering which omits some detail mentioned by Professor Körte in his text. The English of the text is smooth and readable and apparently an accurate translation of the German.

The List of Books (407-437) is a unique feature of the translated edition. It is no less than a very full bibliography of Hellenistic poetry, listing general works, editions, and translations under the heading of each poet to whom more than a passing mention has been given in the body of the book. To some this Appendix will be, perhaps, the most valuable part of the book. The author of The Religious Thought of the Greeks from Homer to the Triumph of Christianity, listed on page 409, is Clifford Herschel Moore, not G<eorge> F<oot> Moore. The Index (441-446) is adequate.

The two young American scholars who have brought out this volume are to be commended for having made a useful work available to a wider circle of English readers and for having enhanced its value by the addition of their excellent bibliography.

WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY
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JOHN W. SPAETH, JR.

ANCIENT MACARONIC VERSE: A CORRECTION

In THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 24.157, column 1 (March 30, 1931), Mr. W. B. Sedgwick writes as follows: "... In Epistle 20 <of Ausonius> we get the only macaronic verse of ancient times known to me. This is a mixture of Greek and Latin, including such a monstrosity as *vinous bonous* ..." In the first place, this verse does not occur in Epistle 20, but in Epistle 8¹; and the offending words are printed by Peiper as *οἰνῶς βονῶς*, that is in a form still more bizarre and confusing than the spelling given by Mr. Sedgwick.

Since this whole Epistle is in macaronics, it is clear that Mr. Sedgwick's expression, "the only macaronic verse known to me", was generic, i.e. he meant by 'verse' an entire poem in macaronic verse.

It seems worth while to add here some other equally wierd combinations to be found in this Epistle by Ausonius: *gelidorpompel* (6), *Ιαροῦ* (11), *calendais* (11), *πολυcantica* (13), *πολυrisa* (15), *forφ* (28), *causais* (28), *ingratais* (28), *lucron* (33), *φιδλague* (38), *οἰνωque* (38).

CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL,
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BENJAMIN W. MITCHELL

<This is the number in the Teubner text, by R. Peiper (1886): see pages 232-234. This letter consists of forty-five verses, in which Greek and Latin are freely intermingled. Mr. Sedgwick referred especially to verse 42.

I know of no classical text more exasperating to use than Peiper's text of Ausonius. His arrangement of the pieces of Ausonius is very different from that in other editions of Ausonius. There are no headings on the pages to show to what group of pieces the particular poems on a given page belong; there is no Table of Contents! One must therefore often search long to find the thing he wants. All this is unfortunate, for the Teubner text of Ausonius is the only text of that author easily accessible to most students. One ought never to use a reference to Ausonius without looking up Peiper's edition; in many, if not in most, cases he will have to translate the reference into terms of Peiper's book, as was done elsewhere in Mr. Sedgwick's article.

In The Loeb Classical Library there is a translation of Ausonius, in two volumes, by H. G. Evelyn White. In this work Peiper's text is followed. For Epistle 8 see 2.24-27. In a footnote to page 24 Mr. White says: "No attempt can here be made to reproduce his macaronic verse". He too uses *verse* in a generic sense. C. K. >



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